

'Sustainable, inclusive societies,' priority for new President of UN economic and social body

27 July 2017 – A week after the High-Level Political Forum (HPLF) assessed the progress on implementing the [2030 Agenda](#), the newly elected President of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) has stressed her priority to push forward the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

"I wish to announce that the key priority of my Presidency will be to develop initiatives towards fostering sustainable, resilient and inclusive societies through participation of all," said Marie Chatardová, Permanent Representative of the Czech Republic to the UN, after her [election by acclamation](#) earlier today.

Delivering her first remarks as President, Ms. Chatardová welcomed the enormous interest among Member States to participate in the Voluntary National Reviews. "It proves that we take our shared vision of a better world seriously," she said.

Noting several positive developments towards reaching the 2030 targets, such as unprecedented technological advancement and innovation, she said that nevertheless, the world continued to experience rising inequalities in most countries.

"If multilateralism is to stay relevant in this evolving context, we need to take these challenges seriously, and work on devising solutions to address them. I believe that the ECOSOC system has a key role to play," she asserted.

To explore further collective action on the issue, the new President announced her intention to convene an ECOSOC Special Meeting at UN Headquarters in May 2018.

"We must work together and make all efforts to achieve what we have set out: 'to leave no-one behind.' Truly no one!" she underscored.



Ambassador Marie Chatardová, newly-elected President of the Economic and Social Council, addresses the Council. UN Photo/Kim Haughton

ECOSOC now seen as multi-stakeholder forum for tackling complex issues

Outgoing ECOSOC President Frederick Musiiwa Makamure Shava took stock of activities under his tenure.

On the priority of eradicating poverty, he said "we explored various

means for promoting sustainable development; expanding opportunities; and addressing related challenges to leave no one behind,” he recalled.

“It was a tall order, but we made good progress,” he affirmed.

Inspired by what the delegation of Norway said during the HLPF: “No one can do everything, but we can all do something,” Mr. Shava urged the respective Ministries, organizations and communities to use this as their mantra in implementing the [SDGs](#).

Asserting that “the moment is ripe” to further strengthen ECOSOC to support the 2030 Agenda, the outgoing president emphasized the importance of aligning the agendas of the General Assembly, ECOSOC and its subsidiary bodies.

According to Mr. Shava, one of the biggest take-aways from the Council's 2017 substantive session was “the importance of ECOSOC as a multi-stakeholder platform for forging solutions to complex and emerging issues,” observing that it is uniquely positioned at the global level to support efforts to leave no one behind

“The success of ECOSOC should be measured not by the number of resolutions that it adopts, but by the impact that it has on the lives of real people. ECOSOC is where Member States coordinate and guide the UN development system, and can therefore make a real impact on citizens around the world,” concluded the outgoing President.

Wu Hongbo, the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, said inequalities among and within countries are deep and addressing them is important for achieving sustainable development and peace. International support for sustainable and resilient societies is based on the recognition that “we cannot overcome global challenges in isolation.”

Solidarity, shared responsibility and open dialogue are more important than ever, he continued. The 2030 Agenda, the [Paris Agreement](#) on climate change, the [Addis Ababa Action Agenda](#), and [Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction](#) together had formed an action plan for global prosperity and partnership.

The Council and its various forums had a key role in nurturing that vital opportunity by supporting implementation through the sharing of integrated and holistic approaches, he stated.